

# 2026 GA AIW Submission - May 8, 2026

Defend Against the Assault on Environmental Protections: Public Lands Rules and the Endangerment Finding

## Social Action Format

Defend Against the Assault on Environmental Protections: Public Lands Rules and the Endangerment Finding

As Unitarian Universalists we covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation, to create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice and to work to repair harm and damaged relationships through our Seven Principles and our newly adopted Shared Values. We have, over nearly seven decades, proven to be champions of the Earth, as a collective, beginning with the 1966 Natural Resources General Resolution which called on us “to preserve our forests and wilderness areas and curb pollution and spoliation of air, water and land by urban growth and industrialization.”

Under the current federal administration and its previous iteration, the assault on our environment has taken the form of many executive orders, laws and regulatory rule changes that allow industry, especially the fossil fuel and other extractive industries, to put our human and nonhuman communities in jeopardy. The current assault now is targeting public lands through rescission of the Roadless Area Conservation and the Conservation & Landscape Health Rules and the executive order on the Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has also declared an “emergency situation on national forest system lands” circumventing Tribal consultation and environmental reviews.

These and other policy changes could lead to the destruction of national parks, monuments and other protected public areas through actions such as the logging of old growth and legacy forests in order to expand fossil fuel production and mineral extraction. These actions, in turn, threaten Tribal sacred sites like Oak Flat and the Grand and Chaco Canyons and violate trust obligations. They also threaten food sovereignty and common health, the destruction of endangered species habitats and adversely impacting air and water access and quality.

Additionally, the recent rescission of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding removes federal responsibility to regulate GHG emissions and directly impacts Tribes and Nations through removing funding for mitigation. This rescission exacerbates climate impacts on tribal subsistence, health, and infrastructure. It also, further, and broadly, exacerbates climate change by adversely impacting food accessibility and security, causing record droughts and floods, sea level rise, and intense change in weather patterns, thereby creating health issues (increased heat and air pollution), and water quality and accessibility issues for all populations.

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the 2026 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), call upon the UUA, its member congregations, and congregants, to:

1. Learn of state and federal public lands in your area or beloved national treasures you've witnessed or hope to witness and how they are being impacted by current policies such as the rescission of the Roadless Conservation Rule and what human and nonhuman communities will be harmed and how.
2. Learn how the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding and the deregulation of greenhouse gas emissions will impact your local, state and regional areas and what communities will be harmed most, looking to low-income, BIPOC and marginalized communities in particular.
3. Come to understand the gravity of these policies and that they work in tandem. Expanding opportunities for fossil fuel and other extractive industries on public lands means the removal of our forests—the lungs of the Earth—critical to combat climate change and allows for unchecked greenhouse gas emissions that will advance climate change, have disastrous environmental degradation impacts and severe economic and health consequences for our human and nonhuman communities.
4. Work with other UU congregations and organizations like Side with Love and UU Ministry for Earth, and other faith and secular organizations to raise awareness of these policies and their impacts in congregations, in local, state and regional communities through such methods as letters to the editor, the arts, organizing informational presentations, protests and demonstrations, film screenings and book readings.
5. Actively engage in legislative and regulatory advocacy with organizations like UU State Action Networks, UUs for Social Justice, and the UU Service Committee to

challenge local civic leaders, as well as state and national legislators to oppose these policies, and to restore the rescinded rules and reverse the executive orders and other policy actions that have and will continue to have disastrous impacts on the health of our public lands, air, water and communities.

6. Finally, continue to learn, raise awareness, actively advocate and collaborate beyond the post-election term as the damage and the harm that has been done, and will be done, to public lands is sure to take generations to repair and restore.

## Resolution Style Format

Defend Against the Assault on Environmental Protections: Public Lands Rules and the Endangerment Finding

BECAUSE we covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation, to create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice and to work to repair harm and damaged relationships through our Seven Principles and our newly adopted Shared Values;

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists have, over nearly seven decades, proven to be champions of the Earth, as a collective, beginning with the 1966 Natural Resources General Resolution which called on us “to preserve our forests and wilderness areas and curb pollution and spoliation of air, water and land by urban growth and industrialization;”

WHEREAS under the current administration and in its previous iteration, the assault on our environment has taken the form of many executive orders, laws and regulatory rule changes that allow industry, especially the fossil fuel and other extractive industries, to put our human and nonhuman communities in jeopardy;

WHEREAS the current assault now is targeting public lands through rescission of the Roadless Area Conservation and the Conservation & Landscape Health Rules, and the executive order on the Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has also declared an “emergency situation on national forest system lands” circumventing Tribal consultation and environmental reviews. These and other policy changes could lead to the destruction of national parks, monuments and other protected public areas through actions such as the logging of old growth and legacy forests in order to expand fossil fuel production and mineral extraction. These actions, in turn, threaten Tribal sacred sites like Oak Flat and the Grand and Chaco Canyons and violate trust obligations. They also threaten food sovereignty and common health, the destruction of endangered species habitats and adversely impacting air and water access and quality.

WHEREAS the recent rescission of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding removes federal responsibility to regulate GHG emissions and directly impacts Tribes and Nations through removing funding for mitigation. This rescission exacerbates climate impacts on tribal subsistence, health, and infrastructure. It also, further, and broadly, exacerbates climate change by adversely impacting food accessibility and security, causing record droughts and floods, sea level rise, and intense change in

weather patterns, thereby creating health issues (increased heat and air pollution), and water quality and accessibility issues for all populations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT we, the 2026 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), call upon the UUA, its member congregations, and congregants, to:

- Learn of state and federal public lands in your area or national treasures you've witnessed, or hope to witness, and how they are being impacted by current policies such as the rescission of the Roadless Conservation Rule and what human and nonhuman communities will be harmed and how;
- Learn how the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding and the deregulation of greenhouse gas emissions will impact your local, state and regional areas and what communities will be harmed most, looking to low-income, BIPOC and marginalized communities in particular;
- Come to understand the gravity of these policies and that they work in tandem. Expanding opportunities for fossil fuel and other extractive industries on public lands means the removal of our forests—the lungs of the Earth—critical to combat climate change and allows for unchecked greenhouse gas emissions that will advance climate change, have disastrous environmental degradation impacts and severe economic and health consequences for our human and nonhuman communities;
- Work with other UU congregations and organizations like Side with Love and UU Ministry for Earth, and other faith and secular organizations to raise awareness of these policies and their impacts in congregations, in local, state and regional communities through such methods as letters to the editor, the arts, organizing informational presentations, protests and demonstrations, film screenings and book readings;
- Actively engage in legislative and regulatory advocacy with organizations like UU State Action Networks, UUs for Social Justice, and the UU Service Committee to challenge local civic leaders, as well as state and national legislators to oppose these policies, and to restore the rescinded rules and reverse the executive orders and other policy actions that have and will continue to have disastrous impacts on the health of our public lands, air, water and communities; and

- Make long-term commitments to continue to learn, raise awareness, actively advocate and collaborate beyond the post-election term as the damage and the harm that has been done, and will be done, to public lands is sure to take generations to repair and restore.